

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 9-12 have been amended editorially and remain pending.

Claims 9-12 have been rejected as indefinite. Applicants request that the rejection be withdrawn. Claims 9-12 have been amended to address the antecedent basis issues noted in the rejection. The "connecting portions" feature of claim 9 has been revised editorially and now is believed to be clear. With respect to the question of the current density in the collector plate, Applicants submit that those skilled in the art would understand readily that the current in the collector plate is not uniform, and thus there are areas of higher and lower current density, which are readily identified. Therefore, no further revision of this aspect of claim 9 should be needed.

Claims 9-12 have been rejected as anticipated by US 6,713,211, Morishita et al. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. A copy of the verified translation of the priority application, JP 2000-131759, the original of which was filed in parent 09/842,562, is submitted herewith. It is submitted that the submission of the verified translation and subsequent perfection of the priority date of April 28, 2000 removes Morishita et al., having an effective prior art date of March 23, 2001, as available prior art. The rejection is moot and should be withdrawn. Applicants are not conceding the correctness of the rejection.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 9-12 are in condition for allowance.

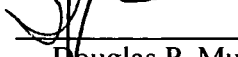
If a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues concerning this application, please contact the Applicants' primary attorney-of record, Douglas P. Mueller (Reg. No. 30,300), at (612)455.3804.



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Respectfully submitted,

HAMRE, SCHUMANN, MUELLER &
LARSON, P.C.
P.O. Box 2902
Minneapolis, MN 55402-0902
(612) 455-3800

By: 

Douglas P. Mueller
Reg. No. 30,300
DPM/lis